3. Establishment of more Veterinary Dispensaries.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Sir, I beg to move the following resolution which runs thus:—

"This Council recommends to the Government that more veterinary aid be provided in the State by the establishment of Veterinary Dispensaries in a few of the more important villages."

In moving this resolution I am happy to think that it would not be raising so much of voice as in the morning. This resolution is of a prosaic nature but at the same time economically important for our State. The Government in answer to an interpellation made, have already stated that they are trying to do something in this direction, for instance, they contemplate the appointment of touring Veterinary Inspectors and also to provide for the training, in elementary principles and first-aid in veterinary science, of a few men at the School at Trichur. They also contemplate for the establishment of some sub-hospitals for veterinary work. In the light of that answer perhaps the Government may ask me what necessity is there for a resolution on this subject at this stage. I say there is a necessity and that for two reasns.

One reason is that even to prompt the Government to do immediately or speedily even the little they now propose to do a resolution seems to be necessary. In other words, we would be only strengthening the hands of the Government or making the Government understand that they are doing this according to the unanimous wishes of the Council. I remember very well that when I made this remark in this Council the Government or the then Diwan, perhaps not in a very good mood, said that the Government do not want any strengthening in that direction. If that be the attitude of the Government, I have nothing to say. In doing anything towards the amelioration of the village people in this direction they have the full support of this House behind it. That is one reason.

Another is—that is the greater reason—that what they have proposed to do is very little compared with the intensity of the problem. The question of cattle is a very prosaic question. But at the same time it is a very important question in view of the economic implications of our country. Well, just to repeat something of a truism, every Hon'ble Member knows that here for agricultural purposes we have only cattle as our motive force. If it is in western countries this problem will not be of much importance, though they are giving great attention to this. In western countries they are carrying on their cultivation by mechanical force, either by steam, motor or electricity. On the other hand in India and especially in Malabar we have only the cattle as the motive force of agricultural operations. I have come across very many farmers who have complained that they could not carry on

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

the cultivation of the land because of the paucity of the cattle. Even the rich substantial farmers are suddenly incapacitated and rendered powerless. They cannot do anything in the matter of cultivation for want of sufficient number of cattle. So the cattle problem is a very important problem and cattle epidemic is a very frequent occurrence in this country. The Veterinary hospitals that we have got at present are few and far between and even these few hospitals are not sufficiently equipped with the necessary things. Only the other day I was told, when I visited a hospital, that the necessary vaccine used for inoculation was not kept in stock. If they want it has to be got from Ootacamund, but in the meantime the poor animal would die. Even in the few Veterinary hospitals no sufficient medicine is kept and they are practically useless. The Royal Agricultural Commission was very emphatic on this and they wanted an elaboration of this department in British India with the result that everybody passing out of the Agricultural College in this particular subject has been absorbed in the department and even then the demand is not over. Here instead of doing anything by way of elaboration we are maintaining the existing hospitals in a very half-hearted way. Perhaps it is because the Government is not sufficiently alive to the immensity of the importance of this great problem or you may have no faith in the Veterinary department. Now the Veterinary department would serve not only the interests of cattle alone but also other interests. Poultry farming, as the Hon'ble Members know, is an important item of domestic wealth. The other day when I visited Narakkal I was told that they are trying to import various varieties of poultry. So also in the matter of other domestic animals. These are things not to be trifled with. They form a very important source of domestic wealth. In this poor country the farmers' income has to be supplemented by these methods also. Then we have got goats and sheep.

Everywhere there is this contagious disease. Veterinary aid in this country is of great importance. We are here making representations to this Council for the redress of many agricultural grievances and there has been the remission of taxation and such other things. There is a severe fall in the agricultural force. If sufficient attention is not paid to this there is no use of giving remission in taxation. This seems to be at the root. I have personally come across many who have lost immensely by this epidemic disease. I remember the case of one man having lost 20 to 25 animals in one epidemic. As a matter of fact the Government Farm at Ollukara in one year lost 40 animals and it was only then that they they came to realise the importance of this disease. They brought matters

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

under control and that was with the help of nature.

In order to ensure the agricultural efficiency of the State it is of urgent necessity that we do something substantially in this direction. The Government are going to establish two sub-hospitals. The establishment of a couple of hospitals or the appointment of one or two touring Inspectors would not solve this important problem. Much more has to be done and paucity of funds or the economic depression that is prevailing to-day cannot be advanced as an argument for not doing anything substantially in this direction because this is the very thing that is calculated to remove economic depression or at least to remove something of the keenness of the economic depression. Prices are at a low level. Coupled with low prices if we have no production at all our farmers will have the double difficulty of having no produce and of getting no reasonable price for that little produce. For these reasons I beg to commend this resolution for the acceptance of the House.

Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.—I have very great pleasure in seconding this resolution. It was in Kanni this year that the Silver Jubilee of this Veterinary Department was to be celebrated and I got the necessary information from the Superintendent, Mr. Subramania Ayyar, and I made some representations to Government that an exhibition might be arranged, so that propaganda work might be done in this direction but without success. The subject is of very great importance, it is helpful in improving the condition of the agriculturists of the State. The disease of "the foot and the mouth" as they say is so very dangerous that cattle die of it in large numbers not only in the rural tracts but also in the cities. Very recently, two or three months ago, this disease, which I believe is called rinderpest, broke out in the Agricultural farm at Ollukara. Very many agriculturists approached the farm authorities for relief but they were surprised to see that there was this disease in the Ollukara farm also. The Superintendent told me, about 2 weeks ago that there was no mortality in the farm, but in the case of farmers all around, very many cattle died of this disease. The retired Superintendent of Agriculture, Mr. I. Raman Menon, in his enthusiasm to do some good, was distributing pamphlets, containing information about the treatment of the disease. Now, some of our Veterinary dispensaries are held in rented buildings. No provision is made for the cattle being looked after in the dispensaries. At any rate, in three dispensaries, in-patient accommodation has not been provided for. The whole department requires re-organisation on the lines that are now being carried on by

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

the Madras Government and I wanted to impress the importance of this question. In the interest of the ryots at large it behoves the Government to particularly improve the Veterinary department in the State. We want more Inspectors, we want regular hospitals for the animals where not only out-patients but in-patients could be treated. We want better equipment. All these would be very helpful not only to the ryots but also to the people who carry on enterprises akin to this department such as pig farming, poultry farming, etc. The Veterinary department became familiar to the people in Ernakulam and Trichur mainly through the castration operations done by the department. In early days nobody realised the usefulness of the department. Anyway the people are now realising the same but the Government is delaying to move forward in this direction. Except appointing one or two assistants to the Veterinary Inspectors and except opening some temporary rented dispensaries in a few of the villages absolutely nothing has been done. Some of the officers in charge of the department told me that they have not got enough materials to carry on their work. The amounts allotted for feeding the cattle, for purchasing necessary medicines, drugs, etc., are so trivial that even 25 per cent of the cases which they get could not be attended to properly. This state of things is not very comfortable. A re-organisation of the department is necessary. This should properly come under the Agricultural department, and if that is done, much useful work could be achieved which will be of lasting benefit to the people of this country.

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Sir, at present there are seven hospitals in the State.

Mr. A. Sankara Poduval.—Two hospitals and five dispensaries.

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—There is a proposal to open two more, one at Mattancheri and the other at Kodakara. But they were not sanctioned last year since money could not be found at the time of the budget. As soon as funds permit there will be no objection to open fresh dispensaries in other out of the way places as well. At present as things stand it will not be possible to open new ones immediately. That is the position. The Government view the question very sympathetically and they will start new dispensaries as soon as funds permit.

Mr. K. T. Mathew.—In connection with this resolution I have to bring to the attention of the Government that sufficient attention is not being paid by the Government to improve the Veterinary hospitals and dispensaries that are now in existence.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Those which are in existence now serve the purpose of only a limited area. The Veterinary hospitals in Ernakulam as well as in Trichur may be of some use to the people in the villages close by. But the other hospitals and dispensaries are not so very useful. Attached to them there are not sheds to keep the animals which are brought there from neighbouring villages for treatment. In some hospitals there is an apology for a shed. If any one who is interested in the treatment of animals goes and inspects these sheds certainly he will recommend to the Government that animals cannot be kept there safely and treated. Unless these are improved these dispensaries will not be useful to the neighbouring villagers. They will be useful only to the people of the villages in which they are located. It is high time for the Government to improve these dispensaries and make necessary sheds for keeping animals which are brought from neighbouring villages.

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan.—On a point of information, Sir, what will be the cost of running a Veterinary dispensary of the sort that we run in these places?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—It will come to about three thousand rupees.

Mr. Joseph Pettah.—Not much is necessary by way of a reply because the Government have been as usual pleading only want of funds, and that, we have again and again shown, is a very untenable argument, especially in this case. There are certain things which may be productive and there are certain others which may be consumptive. I consider this as belonging to the first category of things. If we do not spend funds in this direction, which is a creative direction, very soon we shall have to plead want of funds for many things more. When it is a question of a consuming nature there of course if there is the argument of paucity of funds, one can understand. If we take domestic economy no parent could plead want of funds when it is a case of feeding his children. If he pleads want of funds in feeding his children what shall we say of such a parent? The same has to be said of the Government to-day because they are pleading want of funds for such a vital necessity of Cochin as the protecting of the cattle interest which is the prime necessity for the protection of our agricultural interest. Now the starting of two more dispensaries at Kodakara and Mattancheri will not go a long way in redressing the grievances of the people. I have got first-hand information on this point from some of the villagers of Chalakkudi. Another place of a bigger agricultural interest, the village of Kizhakkummuri in my

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

constituency, a place where there is something like 10,000 cattle and where even 200 acres of land have been reserved as a sort of pasture, whereby the Government have recognised the importance of cattle there, has no dispensary. The nearest dispensary to that place is at Trichur. If the Government are full of sympathy that is a sort of lip-sympathy which can do very little in the direction of redressing some of these real grievances. If we include this particular item of work can we expect to get matters improved or matters to become worse? I assure this House that if we neglect agriculture matters can only become worse. It is simply a surprise to me that the Government are not sufficiently alive to the urgent necessity and importance of this particular problem. They think it is only a matter of cattle. It is the poor cattle who have to work to get our fields cultivated. If the Government would introduce scientific machinery, to some extent cattle may be replaced. Without cattle there is no agriculture and without cattle there is no question of irrigation. Therefore, I once again request the Government to rise up to the importance of this question, to waken themselves a little and to appreciate the hardship of these poor agriculturists in this matter. They seem to be completely ignorant of the difficulty of the people. The Government was pleased to state that some Rs. 3,000 was necessary for running a dispensary and they would not have found it difficult to make provision for this all-important matter, if they wanted. To establish a few more dispensaries all over the land would not amount a very heavy financial commitment. What appears to me is that the Government are not sufficiently alive to the importance of this problem. I wish there was a member in this House to represent the farmers so that our Government could have realised the importance of this problem. I have come across real cases of extreme hardship among the farmers on account of this cattle epidemic which has become a very frequent occurrence now-a-days. If any investigation is held I am sure that my statement would be borne out. Therefore, to drive home to the attention of the Government the great importance of this question I beg to press this resolution to the kind acceptance of the House.

Resolution put and carried.

4. Appointment of Three Ministers.

മിസ്റ്റർ കെ. ടി. മാത്യു.—എന്റെ പ്രമേയം ഇതാണ്.

This Council recommends to give immediate effect to the motion passed by the Legislative Council to appoint three Ministers enjoying the confidence of the Legislature to carry on the administration of the State in cooperation with the Diwan.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly